

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

- ☐ 385 North Arrowhead Avenue - San Bernardino, CA 92415-0160 - (909) 884-4056
- ☐ 1647 East Holt Boulevard - Ontario, CA 91761 - (909) 458-9673
- ☐ 13911 Park Avenue - Victorville, CA 92392 - (760) 243-3773
- ☐ San Bernardino County Vector Control Program
2355 East 5th Street - San Bernardino, CA 92415-0064 - (909) 388-4600

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Also serving the cities of

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 2, 2006
PHD # 06-08

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PUBLIC AWARENESS OF WEST NILE VIRUS

Due to alternating cycles of summer-like weather and rain, mosquito production has already begun, increasing the likelihood of early West Nile Virus (WNV) activity.

West Nile Virus is a disease primarily spread by mosquitoes among birds and incidentally to people, horses and other animals. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. Transmission of WNV from human to human generally does not occur. The majority of people who get infected with WNV will not experience any illness. Only a few will experience mild symptoms such as fever, headache and body aches. West Nile Virus infection, however, can cause severe disease in the elderly and individuals with lowered immune systems. There were about 30 cases and one death from WNV in San Bernardino County in 2005.

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Now is a good time to take a walk around your own property and check to make sure there are no breeding areas for mosquitoes. The majority of mosquito breeding occurs in residential yards. West Nile

Virus is here to stay so it is important that County residents understand how to protect themselves from mosquitoes and West Nile Virus.

County residents can **Fight the Bite** by following the 5 Ds:

- Drain or Dump...**Remove all standing water around your property where mosquitoes lay eggs such as birdbaths, green swimming pools, ponds, old tires, buckets, clogged gutters, or even puddles from leaky sprinklers.
- Dawn and Dusk...**Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active.
- Dress...**Wear shoes, socks, and long pants and long-sleeved shirts that are loose fitting and light colored.
- DEET...** Apply insect repellent containing DEET according to manufacturer's directions.
- Doors...**Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes to prevent mosquitoes from entering home.

If you would like to report a dead bird, please contact the state's West Nile Virus Dead Bird Pick-up hotline at 1-877-968-2473 or by visiting their web site at www.westnile.ca.gov.

This office is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and has 24-hour message service.

Please bear in mind that dead birds do not transmit WNV, it is merely an indicator of the presence of WNV in the neighborhood. The state hotline will determine whether the bird is testable. If the bird must be disposed, please double bag it and place it in your trash container.

If there is a significant mosquito problem where you live or you would like to get free mosquito fish to place in ponds, call San Bernardino County Vector Control Program at 800-44-ABATE (800-442-2283) or (909) 388-4600.

MARK H. UFFER
County Administrative Officer

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